

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

As unemployment continues to rise, we write asking you to consider taking a different approach to funding for the unemployment compensation extension now being considered by the Senate.

As you know, in February, Congress and the President worked together to pass the largest stimulus bill in American history. The purpose of the stimulus was to bring relief to families hit hard by the financial crisis of 2008, improve American infrastructure, and aid businesses as they struggled to maintain sufficient capital levels. But, most importantly, the stimulus was designed to create jobs.

Unfortunately, the stimulus has done little to produce jobs for Americans. Instead of 8 percent unemployment, Americans are facing 9.8 percent unemployment. Economists predict that unemployment will only get worse throughout 2010, growing well beyond 10 percent unemployment. This is clearly not what Congress or the President had in mind when the stimulus became law in February.

Still, the stimulus did do something to help the unemployed by providing additional unemployment compensation benefits. By extending the Bush unemployment compensation extension through the remainder of 2009, the stimulus provided relief to many who were caught off guard by the recession.

The problem now is that unemployment compensation is about to expire. The House has already considered extending unemployment compensation. We voted "no" because, instead of using already authorized stimulus dollars to fund the extension, Congress decided to tax again the very people Americans need to get back to work—employers.

Instead of adding billions of dollars to the federal deficit, we ask you to consider funding the unemployment compensation extension with stimulus dollars. Using stimulus dollars to fund unemployment would be in line with the President's intentions to use H.R. 1 to protect the American workforce. President Obama said the stimulus would, "save or create more than three million jobs." If the stimulus cannot do that, at the very least we believe it should be used to bring relief to the unemployed.

We stand ready and willing to work with you and the Majority party to use unspent stimulus dollars to bring relief to America's unemployed.

Sincerely,

Jorge R. Pitts Joseph Mancini

John Boozma May Fullin

Lynn Jenkins Paul C. Brown

Lynne A. Mahoney Robert L. Tucker

Carla Newman Mark H.

Robert E. Jatta